

and early 1970s moving toward retirement, at the same time that the largest school age population in the Nation's history is moving through our classrooms, breaking enrollment records every year and likely to again for the next 12 to 15 years.

All of this is happening at a time when we are seeing the greatest shift in job skills expectation that we have seen in this country perhaps since that time 100 or 110 years ago when we became a new country.

We see at the same time that school buildings, some tired, many worn out, often obsolete, buildings that were at least in, close to a third of which were built prior to the Great Depression, coming into a time of extreme challenge and expectation. That is the circumstance that we face today. It is what the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. ETHERIDGE) was talking about. It is what the gentleman from Texas (Mr. HINOJOSA) was talking about.

This is not a crisis, but it is a time when we need to understand those needs. We have been through that any number of times since 100 years ago when we put together the Land Grant Colleges Acts. We have seen it in the G.I. bill when millions of men came home from the Second World War, a war fought with some 23 percent high school graduates. It was not until 1951 that we saw half of all Americans graduating from high school. Today those numbers are up into the mid-80s, and the performance of minority populations are the highest they have ever been.

We saw that kind of cooperation in the National Defense Education Act in the wake of Sputnik and in title I for the educationally disadvantaged in the 1960s, the development of special education in the mid-1970s, the adult education programs that have grown in need and performance in the course of this decade alone.

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And we have seen college aid, through financial loans and grants, change the face of higher education in the United States. It has not happened just because it is possible; it has happened because it has been necessary. It has been necessary as we seek to change the face of the Nation yet again.

We need to develop a whole new cohort of well-qualified teachers and to assist in the financing of a new school construction and renovation plan that will make it possible for this largest generation of school learners to take part in that education. This is not something we do simply because we think it would be nice. As we stand here trying to seek to extend the kind of prosperity that we enjoy today through paying down the national debt, through extending the solvency

of Social Security, there is no better way we can do that than through ensuring the skill levels of a new Nation.

Our children will have to learn as if their entire world depended on it, because it does. Their world and our world.

HUNGER RELIEF ACT, H.R. 3192

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mrs. CLAYTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. CLAYTON. Mr. Speaker, we observed World Food Day last week, and we paused to recognize that hunger is still a way of life for far too many in America and around the world. It is for that reason that I rise once again to urge this House and this Congress to pass the remaining provisions of the Hunger Relief Act, H.R. 3192.

This legislation enjoys the support of 186 cosponsors in the House, Democrats and Republicans. The companion bill, S. 1805 enjoys the support of 35 cosponsors in the Senate, Democrats and Republicans. Nearly 1,400 national, State and local organizations in all 50 States have endorsed the Hunger Relief.

Editorial boards, columns, articles and op-eds from the East Coast to the West Coast, from the far north to the far south, have expressed support for the act. Among those are The Washington Post, the Lincoln Journal Star, The New York Times, the Oregonian, the Philadelphia Inquirer, the Tulsa World, the Indianapolis Star, the Dallas Morning News, the Newark Star-Ledger and the North Carolina News and Observer.

In a recent letter, 25 leaders from the religious community urged the President and the Congress to make food stamp benefit restoration for legal immigrants a top priority during the final days of this session. Represented in that group of religious leaders are Catholic, Jewish, Methodist, Lutheran, Presbyterian, Mennonite, and other denominations.

More recently, more than 25 Members of this body sent a letter to the President urging him to help complete this task.

The National Conference of State Legislators, a group that supported the 1996 welfare reform bill, have also joined in that call. The U.S. Conference of Mayors and the National Black Caucus of State Legislators have also endorsed the Hunger Relief Act.

In short, Mr. Speaker, there is widespread support for finishing the job we started earlier with the passage of the agriculture appropriation conference report. As a part of that conference report we included two vitally important provisions from the Hunger Relief Act. We changed the vehicle limit so that families can retain a reliable car without losing food stamp benefits, and we changed the shelter cap so that fami-

lies can obtain decent shelter without losing food stamp benefits. At the very least, we should now restore food stamp benefits for all legal immigrants.

Those legal immigrants who are now excluded from food stamp coverage came to America at a different time than our ancestors, but they should not be treated differently for that reason. They too embrace the promise of liberty etched on the statue in the harbor in New York. It seems strange that we must fight for food for those legal immigrants who cannot fight for themselves.

America is a strong Nation, and we are strong because we can provide quality food at affordable prices. There are many places in the world where the same cannot be said. But the real strength of America is not due to our advanced technology, our economic base, or our military might. The real strength of America is in its compassion for people. The real strength of America is caring and being concerned about those who live in the shadows of life: the poor, the weak, the frail, the disabled, our children, our seniors, the hungry. America's compassion makes us strong.

Less than 3 percent of the budget goes to help to feed the hungry, yet nearly 70 percent of legal immigrants are women, many of them with children.

Mr. Speaker, hunger is more than a mere word; it is a way of life for far too many legal immigrants. When we passed the welfare reform legislation, we did some things that were right, but there was one thing that was wrong. We excluded legal immigrants from the food stamp program.

With such broad-based bipartisan support from the Congress to the White House, from State legislators to governors' mansions and throughout the private sector, we have a chance to correct that mistake. Let us not go home to the comfort of our living rooms and to the refrigerators full of bounty while leaving legal immigrants without one of the most basic necessities of life, and that is food. Let us pass the other part of the Hunger Relief Act.

SOCIAL SECURITY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. SMITH) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SMITH of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, Social Security has really come to light, so I am going to spend 5 minutes talking about Social Security, the problem and the potential solution, and what the presidential candidates are doing in their suggestions to help resolve this serious problem of Social Security.

Mr. Speaker, I came into Congress in 1993; and I introduced my first Social

Security bill. I have introduced a Social Security bill every session, and the last three were scored by the Social Security Administration to keep Social Security solvent for the next 75 years.

I was selected to be chairman of the bipartisan task force on Social Security. I have found it is sort of like an automobile mechanic, the more the mechanic knows about the inside operations, probably the better he lubricates and adds the oil and greases his car. I am concerned, knowing some of the internal operations of Social Security, that there is a lot of friction there, that it is not solvent.

Just briefly, insolvency is certain. We know how many people there are. We know when they are going to retire. We know that people will live longer in retirement. We know how much they are going to pay in and how much they are going to take out. Payroll tax is not going to cover the benefits starting in 2015. It is a pay-as-you-go program. Current workers pay in their tax, and it is almost immediately sent out to current retirees. It is going to take \$120 trillion over and above tax revenues over the next 75 years to accommodate the promises we have made in Social Security.

Some have suggested that economic growth is great now, that that is going to help solve the problem of Social Security. Not true. Social Security benefits are indexed to wage growth. So the higher the wages, the higher the benefits for everybody. When the economy grows, workers pay more in taxes, but also they will earn more in benefits when they retire. Growth makes the numbers look better now but leaves a larger hole to fill later.

The administration has used these short-term advantages as an excuse to do nothing. So if there is one criticism I would have it is the missed opportunity over the last 8 years of not really stepping up to the plate and fixing Social Security.

The Vice President has suggested that if we pay down the debt to the public, the debt we owe to the public is \$3.4 trillion, the suggestion is that we use some of the Social Security surplus, pay down that debt, and then apply another IOU, or use the interest savings on that debt to help fix this big tall tower over here of \$46.6 trillion. So the suggestion is that by paying down the debt, we will solve this problem. This next graph shows why that will not happen. The blue at the bottom represents \$260 billion a year that we are now paying in interest on the debt.

So, look, it has to be a priority. Putting Social Security in the lockbox was a great thing the Republicans did. This year saying that at least 90 percent of the surplus has to go to pay down the debt was a good idea. But even if all of the \$260 billion every year for the next 57 years was used to go into the Social Security Trust Fund, there would still be a shortfall of \$35 trillion.

Look, this is a big-time problem. We have to do it now and not leave a big mortgage for our kids.

Very briefly, the biggest risk is doing nothing at all. I want to show these charts, because AL GORE has criticized Governor Bush of taking a trillion dollars out of Social Security, or using it twice. He is saying that the Governor is going to use it once to pay benefits and once to start private investment accounts.

Over the next 10 years, the revenues coming in to the Social Security Trust Fund are \$7.8 trillion. The benefits, or the money going out, is \$5.4 trillion. That leaves a surplus of \$2.4 trillion. Governor Bush is suggesting we take \$1 trillion of that and start using that to accommodate personally owned retirement accounts that individuals own; that if they die it goes into their estate, unlike Social Security, of course.

So as we can see, having current medium-income workers retire much wealthier by having this kind of magic that will develop with the magic of compound interest is one way to increase retirement benefits and save the system.

Some people have said it is too risky. I show this chart just because this represents the up and down of a 30-year average. Over a 30-year average for the last hundred years, the average income is 6.7 percent.

TRIBUTE TO THE HONORABLE THOMAS EWING AND THE HONORABLE JOHN PORTER, MEMBERS OF CONGRESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to two retiring Members of the Illinois delegation who have faithfully and effectively served their constituents and the citizens of this Nation.

First, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. EWING), who spent 17 years in the Illinois General Assembly and rose to the position of assistant Republican leader and deputy minority leader before he came to Congress. In Congress, TOM EWING has focused much of his attention on issues relating to agriculture, crime prevention, education, economic growth and health care.

It has been a pleasure to work with him, and I wish him well as he returns to the very pleasant, peaceful, and friendly community in and around Pontiac, Illinois.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I turn my attention to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. PORTER), who is completing his 11th term as a Member and is the very astute, sensitive, and effective chairman of the Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services and Education of the Committee on Appropria-

tions. He is founder and cochairman of the Congressional Human Rights Caucus. He has been cited many times by various budget watchdog groups and has stood in the vanguard on environmental issues.

JOHN PORTER has been a strong supporter of biomedical research, a friend of community health centers, and has stood tall against the continuous spread of HIV/AIDS. The Core Center of Chicago stands today as a model to fight these dreaded diseases and is indeed a testament to the support which JOHN PORTER gave to its efforts.

One of the things that I have always liked best about JOHN PORTER is his ability to convey optimism even when the cupboard is practically bare. He is always eager to look, to see, to try and determine and figure out whether or not he can find greatly needed resources for these programs.

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I thank him for his sensitivity to the issues facing America and especially my district and wish him well in retirement.

Mr. Speaker, I also take this opportunity to pay tribute to the Honorable Donald Lemm, Mayor of Bellwood, Illinois, on the occasion of his pending retirement.

Mayor Lemm has lived in Bellwood all of his life, he and his late wife and four children and five grandchildren. He and his current wife, Joy, live at 517 51st Avenue. Mayor Lemm is a graduate of DePaul University with a degree in business administration and accounting. He is a member of the VFW and served in Korea with the 71st Station Hospital as sergeant major.

Prior to becoming mayor, Donald Lemm was a CTA executive for 40 years, serving in the capacities of training specialist, methods analyst, superintendent of bus and rail transportation, and retired as manager of insurance and pensions. He also served as administrative assistant to the chairman of the CTA Board and was retained by the Chicago Transit Authority as a consultant for 3 years after retirement.

Mayor Lemm is active in St. Simeon parish, has served several times as president of the Holy Name Society, is a member of the St. Simeon Contemporary Choir and St. Simeon Traveling Troop, is a lector and minister of the cup, and has served as a member of the parish financial planning commission.

Prior to becoming mayor, Donald Lemm served for 16 years as village clerk. As mayor, he has led the Village of Bellwood into the new millennium, opening up opportunity, creating increased property values, and serving as the role model.

Mr. Lemm has demonstrated what it really means to be a true public servant, always putting the interests of his community and his people above any personal interests.